Holtsmere End Infant and Nursery School

RE Policy

Date: March 2025

Signed:

Nicola O'Connell – Headteacher

Jane Bisseker – Chair of Governors

Background to Religious Education at Holtsmere End Infant and Nursery School.

Religious Education (RE) is not a National Curriculum subject, but must be provided for all registered pupils in state-funded schools in England including those in the sixth form, unless withdrawn by their parents. It is a necessary part of a broad and balanced curriculum.

As RE is not nationally determined a locally agreed syllabus of RE is prepared by a local Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) and adopted by a local authority. It is this Hertfordshire Agreed Syllabus of Religious Education, which we have used as the basis of our planning and delivery of RE.

Families who send their children to this school are in the main 'nominally' Christian. Some children are from practising Christian families, in addition there are children who are from religions other than Christianity and some from non-religious backgrounds. Our school is committed to valuing the opinions, beliefs and practices of all and to showing sensitivity to minority groups.

Purpose of study and aims

At Holtsmere End Infant and Nursery School we believe that RE both supports and strengthens what we aim to do in every aspect of school life. Our inclusive ethos and the value which we place on the development of the whole child; spiritually, morally, socially, culturally and intellectually, is reflected in the RE curriculum.

RE provokes challenging questions about the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, beliefs about God, the self and the nature of reality, issues of right and wrong and what it means to be human. It challenges pupils to reflect on, consider, analyse, interpret and evaluate issues of truth, belief, faith and ethics and to communicate their responses.

Purpose of Study: At Holtsmere End Infant and Nursery School we aim to deliver a high quality RE learning experience for all pupils. RE teaching provides pupils with a systematic knowledge and understanding about Christianity, principal religions and worldviews which give life value. Where we have pupils who are members of other world faiths, then in line with our inclusion policy and valuing of the individual, we include aspects of that religion in RE.

RE aims to enable pupils to become religiously literature (the human experience of religion and belief and the development of skills for expressing these experiences), and theologically literate (the big concepts

on which religions are founded and the development of skills for expressing these experiences). By developing these skills, it is our hope that pupils will have the skills and knowledge required to engage in life in an increasingly diverse society. RE is not about telling pupils what religious views they should have but rather assists them in gaining shared human understanding, developing personal identity and searching for meaning in the context of evaluating different viewpoints.

Aims: The curriculum for Religious Education aims to ensure that all pupils develop knowledge and understanding of sources of wisdom (sacred texts, psalms, hymns, prayers, poems, letters, paintings, icons, artefacts and people) and their impact whilst exploring personal and critical responses.

Sources of wisdom and their impact. **All pupils should:**

- know, understand and explore the significance and impact of sacred texts, other sources of wisdom and ways of expressing meaning;
- express ideas and insights about the nature of beliefs, values and practices and their impact upon the identity of individuals and communities;
- recognise and explore the diversity which exists within and between religious traditions.

Personal and critical responses. **All pupils should:**

- express with increasing discernment their personal reflections, critical responses and connections to faith and belief enquiring into philosophical, moral and ethical issues;
- engage with the questions and answers offered by religions and worldviews concerning ultimate questions and human responsibility;
- develop the skills required to engage with others in dialogue and to cooperate in society with respect and compassion.

3. Content and approach

From Reception classes to Year 6, pupils must:

- follow a coherent and systematic study of the principal religion of Christianity across each key stage and;
- be introduced to the other five principal religions represented in Great Britain by the end of key stage 2.
- By the end of their time at Holtsmere End Infant and Nursery School (Year 2), pupils must have studied a minimum of two religions, including Christianity.

EYFS	Children will encounter Christianity and religions and beliefs represented in the class, school or local community. Religious Education will support a growing sense of the child's awareness of self, their own community and their place within this.
Years 1 and 2	A minimum of two religions are studied. Christianity and at least one other religion. At Holtsmere End Infant and Nursery School children in KS1 are exposed to 3 religions. Our focus is on Christianity, Islam and Judaism. Pupils also learn about other religions in theme days such as 'Around the World day'.

We explore the above through the eight key areas of learning, in order to meet the aims of our curriculum.

These areas (in no particular order) are:

Beliefs and practices;

Sources of wisdom;

Symbols and actions;

Prayer, worship and reflection;

Identity and belonging;

Ultimate questions;

Human responsibility and values;

Justice and fairness.

The teaching of RE involves some direct teaching and whole class, group, paired and individual activities, where pupils are actively engaged in learning through strategies including enquiry, exploration, discussion, asking and answering questions, artefacts, visits and visitors of faith and belief.

Following the 2021 Ofsted Research Review into Religious Education, it is important to be aware that all

curriculum content about religious and non-religious traditions is a representation of reality. Everything we teach pupils about religion – or non-religion – is somebody's version of reality. It might depict a certain group of people's ways of showing their faith, or it might generalise and show the most common, or traditional, ways of celebrating a tradition. As staff, if we ensure all RE content is considered as a representation, this will come through in the way that we teach.

4. Time allocation for RE

In line with the requirements of the Hertfordshire Agreed Syllabus of Religious Education:

At EYFS RE is delivered flexibly according to the statutory requirements of the EYFS;

At Key Stage 1 pupils spend 60 hours over 2 years (approximately 10 hours per term)

These minimum time requirements include visits and RE curriculum days but not school productions related to festivals, assembly or collective worship time. (See Collective Worship policy)

5. Withdrawal from the RE curriculum

At Holtsmere End Infant and Nursery School it is our practice to talk to parents to ensure that they understand the aims and value of the RE curriculum before honouring the right of withdrawal from RE (note 6), however parents of pupils at a community, foundation or voluntary school have a right to withdraw their children from RE. If a parent asks for their child to be wholly or partly excused from attending any RE the school must comply unless the request is withdrawn. Any parent who wishes to withdraw their child is expected to consult the Headteacher and confirm this request in writing. Teachers may also withdraw from the teaching of RE.

6. Assessment, recording and reporting (see school Assessment policy)

The Hertfordshire Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education sets out a structure for recognising pupil achievements and each pupil can work progressively towards achieving the expected end of key stage learning outcomes as a requirement outlined in the syllabus. Assessment in RE is seen in its broadest sense and is not limited to measurement and testing.

Through activities including discussion with pupils, group activities, written work, observation and asking and answering questions, teachers are continually finding out about their pupils' achievements. This information is recorded against expected learning outcomes for assessment and in line with other areas of the curriculum. Through our detailed progression plans, we ensure that all children are able to thrive with their RE learning, basing our assessment on individual pupil subject knowledge that is displayed in a wide range of ways, including, but not limited to, written outcomes.

As a staff team we undertake moderation exercises (both internal and external) to ensure that we are familiar with the expected year group requirements and what they mean in the context of a pupil's work.

7. Planning

In order to ensure that our aims are met and the Programme of Study is covered at each key stage the

school follows the Hertfordshire Agreed Syllabus of Religious Education. Our long term planning builds-in coverage of and progression in both the content and concepts outlined in the eight key areas of learning. Our schemes of work ensure that pupils have encountered and explored the religions through the EYFS and Key Stage 1, with a focus on key vocabulary and significant people. We use a combination of teaching RE explicitly through dedicated RE lessons, through the creative project curriculum, and RE events and celebrations, depending on the material which has to be covered.

Short term planning of individual lessons is the responsibility of the class teacher, supported by The RE Subject Leader. Through the half termly progression overview, teachers are directed towards which parts of the programme of study are to be the focus, the learning objectives for the unit, the learning tasks planned to achieve them, significant people, key vocabulary, any resources and visits or visitors needed.

9. Cross curricular approaches

RE teaching and learning are the means to many wider cross-curricular themes and dimensions. Children's skills in oracy and literacy are enhanced, and problem-solving, decision-making and interpersonal skills developed.

RE presents many opportunities to explore multicultural and equal opportunities issues and for consideration of the environment. Moral questions are raised and pupils develop a sense of citizenship through many aspects of the explicit RE curriculum. Links are made with people and communities within the locality and also nationally where appropriate.

The RE curriculum makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development, knowledge and awareness of Prevent, British values, keeping children safe and the diversity, equality and cohesion agendas, which are all essential contributing factors in providing outstanding RE teaching and learning for all children.

9. Leadership and management

The RE subject leader manages this area of the curriculum in line with the job description for subject leaders and supported by the Senior Leadership Team.

A yearly action plan and monitoring overview is created to highlight priorities for the subject for the

academic year and shared with all staff. There are regular ‘Subject leader’ staff meetings each term, where areas for development, priorities and subject knowledge and confidence are focused on.

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